



## FINANCIAL AID DEVELOPMENTS

By Kim Slote, policy analyst

### TECHNICAL

The USDE published an [Electronic Announcement](#) Jan. 5, 2015: Availability of EDEExpress for Windows 2015-2016, Release 1.0. This release contains global, application processing and packaging functionality for the 2015-2016 cycle. You can access EDEExpress for Windows 2015-2016 on the Federal Student Aid Download website located at <https://www.fsadownload.ed.gov>. Other EDEExpress 2015-2016 documents offered on the website include:

- Installation Guide for EDEExpress for Windows 2015-2016
- EDEExpress for Windows 2015-2016, Release 1.0 Cover Letter
- EDEExpress for Windows 2015-2016, Release 1.0 Desk Reference
- 2015-2016 Packaging Technical Reference

A [Guaranty Agency Technical Update](#) was issued by the USDE Jan. 9, 2015: [GA-2015-01](#): Loan Transfer Process and Total and Permanent Disability Discharge Reporting to NSLDS. Clarification is provided in this technical update on the loan transfer process and reporting procedures for loans assigned to the USDE for discharge based on TPD and assignment to the Debt Management and Collections System. Instructions are

provided to indicate how these loans are to be reported on NSLDS.

A second [Guaranty Agency Technical Update](#) was issued by the USDE Jan. 12, 2015: [GA-2015-02](#): Fiscal Year 2012 3-Year Cohort Default Rate Calculations. The schedule by which NSLDS will calculate the draft and official cohort default rates is included in this update.

### HEAL PROGRAM

On Jan. 6, 2015, the USDE published an [Electronic Announcement](#): HEAL Program Information - Maximum HEAL Program Interest Rates for Quarter Ending March 31, 2015. The “Current Maximum Interest Rates” section of the [HEAL Interest Rates](#) page of the [HEAL Information Area](#) on the IFAP Website has been updated with the maximum HEAL Program interest rates for the quarter ending March 31, 2015.

### FFEL SPECIAL ALLOWANCE RATES

A [SAP Memo](#) was published by the USDE Jan. 7, 2015: Federal Family Education Loan Program Special Allowance Rates for the Quarter Ending Dec. 31, 2014. Attachments to the memo contain the quarterly special allowance rates computed for the quarter ending Dec. 31, 2014. The bond equivalent rates of the 91-day Treasury



## FINANCIAL AID DEVELOPMENTS

By Kim Slote, policy analyst

Bills auctioned during the quarter are also provided. The average rates are below.

- Commercial Paper Rate .14 percent
- LIBOR Rate .16 percent
- Treasury Bill Rate .03 percent

### FAFSA

An [Electronic Announcement](#) was published by the USDE Jan. 8, 2015: 2015-2016 Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The final version of the 2015-2016 FAFSA is available at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). Students can print the FAFSA and complete it manually or enter their data on a screen-fillable form before printing. A copy of the 2015-2016 FAFSA is attached to the announcement in English and Spanish.

### GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

The USDE published an [Electronic Announcement](#) Jan. 9, 2015: Gainful Employment Electronic Announcement #51-NSLDS Gainful Employment Submittal File Record Layouts. The updated National Student Loan Data System Gainful Employment Submittal File Record Layouts are now available. The layouts can be downloaded from the [NSLDS Record Layouts](#) section on IFAP or from the [Resources](#) section of the [Gainful Employment Information Page](#).

### THIRD-PARTY SERVICERS

Dear Colleague Letter [GEN-15-01](#) was issued by the USDE Jan. 9, 2015: Third-Party Servicer Institutional Requirements and Responsibilities. Guidance in the DCL clarifies third-party servicer requirements for institutions that participate in the student assistance programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. In addition to identifying what activities performed by an entity establish them as a third-party servicer under the regulations, the topics listed below are covered in the DCL.

- Institutional Requirements for Reporting Third-Party Servicer Information
- Third-Party Servicer Contract Requirements
- FERPA Requirements
- Security Information Program Requirements
- Third-Party Servicer Compliance Audits

Questions about this information can be asked by phone at (816) 268-0543 or sent to the Third-Party Servicer Oversight Group by e-mail at [FSAPC3rdpartyserviceroversight@ed.gov](mailto:FSAPC3rdpartyserviceroversight@ed.gov).



## FINANCIAL AID DEVELOPMENTS

By Kim Slote, policy analyst

### FSA ID INFORMATION

On Jan. 12, 2015, the USDE published an [Electronic Announcement](#): FSA ID Information-Communicating the Transition to Students. The new login process for the USDE student and borrower-based websites, that was announced in an [Oct. 1, 2014](#) Electronic Announcement, will be implemented on April 26, 2015. Websites affected by this change will include the following:

- [FAFSA on the Web](#)
- [NSLDS Student Access](#)
- [StudentLoans.gov](#)
- [StudentAid.gov](#)
- [TEACH Grant website](#)

The USDE outlines their communication strategy in this announcement to notify users of the upcoming change. The following activities will be completed this spring.

- An announcement will be posted about the FSA ID on each impacted website in mid-April 2015.
- A new page will be created on [StudentAid.gov](#) in mid-April that provides additional information about the upcoming transition to the FSA ID. Once the FSA ID is implemented on April 26, 2015, users who visit the PIN

website will automatically be redirected to this page.

- After implementation on April 26, 2015, users who arrive at the impacted websites will be directed to a link to register for their new FSA ID. The registration process should take less than seven minutes.

### CAMPUS-BASED PROGRAMS

A [Federal Register](#) notice was published by the USDE Jan. 12, 2015: Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Work-Study and Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant programs; 2015-2016 Award Year Deadline Dates. The notice announces the 2015-2016 award year deadline dates for postsecondary institutions to submit requests and documents for the Federal Perkins Loan, FWS and FSEOG programs. To ensure continued funding levels and participation in the programs, institutions must comply with the campus-based reporting deadlines.

### STUDENT AID REPORT

The USDE published an [Electronic Announcement](#) Jan. 13, 2015: 2015-2016 Student Aid Report, SAR Acknowledgement and Student Aid Eligibility Worksheet for Question 23 mock-ups. The SAR mock-up and SAR Acknowledgement mock-up are provided as



## FINANCIAL AID DEVELOPMENTS

By Kim Slote, policy analyst

a community resource that can be used as a training tool for staff or for financial aid presentations. The mock-ups, available in English and Spanish, can be requested by an email to [StudentExperienceGroup@ed.gov](mailto:StudentExperienceGroup@ed.gov). The Student Aid Eligibility Worksheet for Question 23 will help applicants determine eligibility for federal student aid when a conviction has been reported for possessing or selling illegal drugs on the FAFSA or when question 23 of the FAFSA has been left blank.

### DIRECT PLUS LOAN PROGRAM

A [Federal Register](#) notice was published by the USDE Jan. 14, 2015: Early Implementation of the PLUS Loan Adverse Credit Regulation. The USDE has established March 29, 2015, as the date for early implementation of the Direct PLUS Loan Program regulations that update the standard for determining if a potential parent or student borrower has an adverse credit history. The regulations also require loan counseling for parents and students who have an adverse credit history, but who are approved for a PLUS loan based on extenuating circumstances or by obtaining an endorser for the PLUS loan. The loan counseling must be completed before receiving the loan funds.

### LOAN SERVICING

An [Electronic Announcement](#) was published by the USDE Jan. 16, 2015: Loan Servicing Information-Reporting Student Loan Interest Payments for 2014. The announcement includes general information for the financial aid community about reporting student loan interest payments. Answers to the following questions are provided.

- Under what circumstances do federal loan servicers report interest payments on IRS Form 1098-E?
- How many 2014 1098-Es should a borrower expect to receive?
- What are the different scenarios that may apply to 2014 1098 dissemination?

### FEDERAL PELL GRANT

A Dear Colleague Letter [GEN-15-02](#) was published by the USDE Jan. 29, 2015: 2015-2016 Federal Pell Grant Payment and Disbursement Schedules. Both PDF and Excel versions of the Federal Pell Grant Payment and Disbursement Schedules are attached to the announcement. These schedules must be used to determine Federal Pell Grant awards for the 2015-2016 award year for full-time, three-quarter-time, half-time and less-than-half-time students. The maximum award for the 2015-2016 Federal



## **FINANCIAL AID DEVELOPMENTS**

**By Kim Slote, policy analyst**

Pell Grant is \$5,775. Additional information is provided in the announcement regarding eligibility of students without a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent that are enrolled in an “eligible career pathway program”.

### **FEDERAL SCHOOL CODE LIST**

On Jan. 30, 2015, the USDE published an [Electronic Announcement](#): 2015-2016 Federal School Code List of Participating Schools. The updated [2015-2016 FSC List of Participating Schools](#) is now available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals website. The unique codes on this list are assigned by the USDE to schools participating in the Title IV federal student aid programs. Students enter the FSC on their Free Application for Federal Student Aid for each school they wish to receive the processed application results. Instructions are provided in the announcement for schools that need to correct or update their FSC on the list.